

CITY OF JERSEY CITY

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JERSEY CITY CELEBRATES BLACK HISTORY MONTH EVENTS TO HONOR THE PAST AND PRESENT ACHIEVEMENTS OF AFRICAN-AMERICANS

JERSEY CITY – Mayor Jerramiah T. Healy and members of the **Municipal Council**, in conjunction with the **Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Cultural Affairs**, are hosting a number of events in honor of **Black History Month**. Kicking off the Black History Month celebrations will be the opening reception for the **Black History Month Group Art Exhibition** from **6 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Tuesday, February 10, 2009** City Hall Rotunda, 280 Grove Street.

The exhibition will showcase an eclectic mix of established and emerging Jersey City African-American artists as well as student works from the Hudson County School of Technology. The exhibit features the warm and masterly work of Gerald Glover, a painting done in broken glass by Senegalese artist Ibou Ndoye, and new drawings by Adam Tharpe.

The show, which is organized by City Hall Art Curator Greg Brickey, will run through the end of February. Gallery hours are **Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.** and **Saturdays and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

“Black History Month is a time to commemorate African-Americans who have helped change the world,” said **Mayor Healy**. “I encourage you to come celebrate with us and experience the rich diversity and cultural heritage that makes Jersey City a wonderful place to call home.”

At **12 noon on Wednesday, February 11, 2009**, Mayor Healy will also host a **flag-raising** over City Hall in honor of **Black History Month**.

In addition, the City will sponsor the **14th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Oratory Competition** on **February 26, 2009**, at City Hall Council Chambers, 280 Grove Street. (time to be announced). Hosted by Mayor Jerramiah T. Healy and Deputy Mayor Kabili Tayari, the Oratory Competition spotlights the best and brightest Jersey City students from grades three through eight.

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Students are required to present an original work by the late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., which is judged according to length, clarity, memorization, and overall presentation. Contestants are broken down into two categories – grades three to five and grades six to eight - and represent public, private, and charter schools across the City.

The month-long celebrations will close out with a program commemorating the **100th Anniversary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)**. Hosted by Mayor Jerramiah T. Healy, the Division of Cultural Affairs, and the Jersey City chapter of the NAACP, the program, **Black History Month: The NAACP Celebrates Its 100th Anniversary**, will take place from **6 p.m. to 9 p.m., Friday, February 27, 2009**, at City Hall Council Chambers, 280 Grove Street.

The program will feature special performances by the Orient Church of God, Winn Productions, Timothy Wilson, and Choice. Featured speakers will be Mayor Healy, Deputy Mayor Kabili Tayari, Councilwoman Viola Richardson, State Senator Sandra B. Cunningham, and other respected dignitaries.

“I am extremely honored to recognize the accomplishments of one of the oldest and largest civil rights organizations in America. The NAACP has continued to build and grow on the collective courage of people of all races, nationalities, and faiths united on the one premise that all men and women are created equal,” said **Mayor Healy**. “The NAACP continues to be a voice for change and equality for disenfranchised people everywhere.”

Formed in 1909, by a multiracial group of progressive thinkers, the NAACP is a non-profit organization established with the objective of insuring the political, educational, social and economic equality of minority groups. Its mission is to eliminate racial hatred and discrimination.

Those interested in learning more about the African-American experience and contributions, or wishing to become better acquainted with Black History Month, and our shared past and heritage, are encouraged to visit the Jersey City website at www.jerseycitynj.gov or the Afro-American Historical and Cultural Society Museum, located on the second floor of the Greenville Branch of the Jersey City Public Library, at 1841 Kennedy Boulevard.

For more information, **contact the Division of Cultural Affairs at 201-547-6921.**

All media inquiries should be directed to Jennifer Morrill, Press Secretary to Mayor Jerramiah T. Healy at 201-547-4836 or 201-376-0699.///